

## UNIT 3

## JAINISM

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### 3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we are going to cover the key features of a religion that has come down to us right from the pre-Aryan antiquity. It has given the world some unique doctrines in philosophy. Though we may not be able to make a detailed analysis of those philosophical doctrines here, we will see their impact on religious views. First, we will try to have an overview of its historical development. Next, we will identify its basic scriptures and beliefs. Thirdly, we will try to understand the Jain idea of salvation and finally learn the ethical teachings of this ancient religion and still practiced by a vibrant minority. By the end of this Unit you should be able to:

- Have an over-all glance at the long history of Jainism
- Identify the basic scriptures and beliefs of Jainism
- Understand the Jain Path to Liberation
- Appreciate Jain teachings on morality

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of the world originating on the Indian soil. Jainism has a rich history not only because of its continuity of existence for over 2500 years in India, but also because of its unique contributions to Indian philosophy, logic, mathematics, art, astronomy and literature. Its special emphasis on ethical purity, religious tolerance, spiritual contentment, ecological protection is all of topical relevance to today's society all over the world.

Like Buddhism, Jainism also arose in opposition to the sacrificial Vedic religion, and the domination of the high caste. It does not advocate belief in God or gods to whom we need to pray nor does it accept the intercessory role of priestly class in society. It has empowered its followers to be spiritually self-reliant with its key idea: 'Everyone is maker of one's own destiny'. That is why it is fittingly called *Jaina Dharma*. The word "Jaina", derived from the root word *ji* meaning 'to conquer.' It was established by a 'great hero' who was himself a 'conqueror of self' to make his followers also to be 'spiritual conquerors.'

## 3.2 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Our attempt in this section is just to have a glance at the origin and development of the Jain religion. After stating the traditional claim about its origin, we will devote more time to the historical beginnings from Mahavira. Then we will trace its development in the formation of schisms, and finally cast a quick glance at the present day situation too.

### Origin from antiquity

The Jains consider their religion to be eternal and imperishable. The darkness of error may envelop the truth periodically. But the Tirthankaras will appear again and again and make it blossom in youthful beauty like the spring. 'Tirthankara' literally means a 'bridge-maker'. Religiously, 'tirtha' is the holy bridge for people to cross the ocean of the bondage of birth-misery-death (*samsara*). Jains recognize 24 Tirthankaras who have enlivened the faith, periodically. The first Tirthankara was Rishabha. The last of these was Mahavira. The Jains know their names and can narrate many details from their life. But their narratives about them all except the last two (Parshva and Mahavira) are legendary and mythological. Nevertheless, Mahavira was a historical personality, as corroborated by other sources as well. The 'Jaina Dharma' that has come to us is the one that was expounded by Mahavira only.

### The Historical origin from Mahavira

Vardhamana ( c. 599–527 BCE) was the second son of a chieftain of a politically powerful clan in Magadah, the present Bihar. His mother was sister of local ruler too. Obviously his upbringing was also royal. He was also married to a beautiful lady Yasodha, and had a daughter from her. When he was 28 years old his parents died of self imposed starvation as they were already believing devotees of Parshva (the 23<sup>rd</sup> Tirthangara who had lived during the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE). May be that it had such an impact on the prince that he wanted to leave his home in pursuance of a life of asceticism. But he was dissuaded by the family members. But he was keen on his search that, finally after two years, he got the consent of his elder brother, renounced the family life and joined the ascetic order of Nirgranthas (Free of Bonds) founded by the teacher Parshva himself.

### Mahavira the Seeker

After some time Mahavir felt that the precepts of Nirgranthas were not strict enough. So he left them and went on as a wanderer, without shelter to the vagaries of weather. He exposed himself to the attacks by insects, injuries and abuse of men, eating nothing but what was offered to him by others, often observing long fasts. He even realized the necessity of renouncing all attachments and possessions, including the only garment he wore. After such a long search of 12 years, finally when he achieved the state of 'omniscience' or *Kevala* ( literally, aloneness) he was called *Mahavira* (the Great Hero) , *Jina* (victor, one who had conquered the self as well as the world). *Arhat* (a venerable person).

### Mahavira' Mission

Immediately after his Attainment, Mahavira realized the duty to proclaim his path of liberation to all creatures, and revive Parshva's teachings. Now he also kept up travelling on bare feet, unclothed and begging for food. He preached to all, Aryans, barbarians, men and women, and even to the creatures like frogs. He attracted people from all walks of life, rich and poor, kings and commoners, men and women, princes and priests, caste-people as well as untouchables. Many of his followers also became renouncers, abandoning worldly pleasures, and being

convinced that renunciation was the way to conquer all passions. He organized his followers into a fourfold orders: two for monastic life and two for lay people.

- The Order of **Sadhu** (Monk) and the Order of **Sadhvi** (Nuns). They practise self-control and have given up all desires and earthly possessions become the spiritual practitioner and teachers. They follow strictly five maha-vratas (you will see in details in Sec.3. 5)
- The Order of **Shravak** (lay men) and the Order of **Shravika** (lay women). They are not required to renounce the world, but are expected to discharge household duties by honest means and live a progressive pure life. They need to follow twelve vows of lay people.

According to tradition, Mahavira won over 14,000 monks 36000 nuns, lakhs of laymen and laywomen as his followers. Now that he has, thus, founded the four 'thirthas' he came to be called the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthangara (Literally, Bridge-maker).

Mahavira is remembered not so much as founder of a new religion as the renewer or reviver of Jainism. He was a great and powerful thinker too. He had taken a keen interest in all the problems of life at his time. The answers he gave were systematic and yet analytically interpreting even the minutest details of the issues. His spiritual power and moral greatness was recognized even by his contemporaries, belonging to other religions. Finally at the age of 72, he died of self- imposed starvation. This gave him still another title 'Siddha' (the one who has acquired Pure Consciousness). As any other Siddha, he is living on the top of the cosmos in a state of perfect knowledge, perfect vision, complete power and bliss. It is this night of his salvation that people began to celebrate as the Festival of Lights (Dipavali) in his honor.

#### **Rise of Sects**

In a few centuries after Mahavira's nirvana, the Jaina community (*Sangha*) grew more and more complex. One section of the Sangha was too ascetic minded and puritanistic in their approach. Another section was liberal. The disagreement between the two groups over largely monastic practices led to schism in Jainism, division that began around the second century BCE and was finalized in the formation of two sects in the first century CE: Later, many other points of disagreements (e.g., the question regarding the life-story of Mahavira, canon of Scriptures, the position of women etc. contributed to the schism. Thus, there arose two branches of Jainism:

**Digambaras** (literally, "the sky clad") maintained that:

- Monks must be naked because nakedness is proof of the conquest of sin.
- Tirthankars should be represented naked without ornaments.
- Mahavira never married
- Only males can achieve enlightenment. Consequently, women do not become naked ascetics. They cannot obtain Moksha.

**Shvetambaras** (literally "the white clad") opposed all the claims mentioned above. They upheld wearing of a simple white garment. Probably the regional factors must have contributed to the division. The Digambaras were principal force of culture in the South and in central India enjoying the royal patronage from the local kings. The Digambaras contributed to the development of vernacular language in these regions. But the Shvedambaras played much the same role in the North and the West of India.

#### **Later Developments**

By 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, the Digambaras had to retreat to the north, owing to the disfavor they incurred from the local kings, which itself on account of the spread of Hindu Bhakti movement.

By 16<sup>th</sup> century Jainism had reached the current geographical status and from now on it witnessed various reform movements within. From among the Svetambaras, a reformist sect arose about the 15<sup>th</sup> century by name **Sthanakvasi Sect**: criticizing image-worship, and temple-cult because it was not even mentioned once in the Scriptures. On the contrary Lonka Sa pointed out that the practice was not lawful. So there arose after him **Lonka Sa Sect**.

From the Lonka Jains still another reformer arose, Viraji of Surat. He was critical of the Sadhus that they were leading less austere life.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century there arose two sects from among the Digambaras too. As against **Vishvapanthis (or Bispanthis)** who install images of gods like Bhairava in their temples, cover idols with saffron clothes, offer flowers, sweets and wave lights etc., the **Terapanthis** did not accept any of these.

#### **The Present day situation**

Many sects have arisen among Jains on account of minor differences. And they all agree on the main doctrines of the Tirthankaras. Today, the Jains remain a religious minority constituting 3.2 million of Indian population, yet they are powerful in retaining their identity. They are the oldest practicing minority of indigenous religion originating in ancient India. They avoid farming for fear of inflicting violence accidentally to insects. They prefer to be mainly jewelers, merchants, moneylenders, and industrialists. As such they live in urban centers in the modern states of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka. As merchants and business people they are known for their honesty. Even though the Jains are a wealthy community, they seek out humanitarian causes to support them and relieve suffering. They are particularly renowned for operating centers dedicated to maintaining abused and sick animals. Their key principles like Ahimsa had such an impact on Mahatma Gandhi's policy-development regarding the use of non-violent resistance in his liberation movements.

#### **Check Your Progress I**

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer  
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1. How did Vardhaman get the titles of 'Jina,' 'Mahavira,' and 'Tirthangara'?

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2. State the main divisions of Jainism?

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### 3.3 SACRED SCRIPTURES OF JAINISM

It may be convenient to divide the Jaina scriptures into two main groups: (i) The Early Prakrit Scriptures (ii) Later Sanskrit Scriptures.

Mahavira's teachings were first orally transmitted to people. His disciples, Ganadharas, wrote them down, first in the text form of 14 *Purvas* (earlier works) and then in 12 *Angas* (parts). They were faithfully preserved by the leaders of the community among the first followers. However, there arose some questions about parts of this canon.

Hence a Council was called around 300 BCE in Pataliputra to put together the Canon anew. There they found out that the 12<sup>th</sup> Anga, containing the Purvas, was not authentic. Bhadrabahu who knew this completely could not attend the Council because he was at that time on a penitential vow of 12 years in Nepal. Therefore, Sthulabhadra was instructed to go there along with many other monks and learn the Purvas from him. And the mission was successful too. However, in the process of transmission for 7 generation of teachers after Sthulabhadra, the knowledge of the 10 Purvas was completely lost.

#### Cannon of the Shvetambaras

It was in that context that Shvedambaras convened a Council at Valabhi in Gujarat in the 5<sup>th</sup> CE to edit and preserve whatever remained as holy works. The earliest portions of Jain scriptures belong to the period between 400 BCE and 200 CE. They are all in Prakrit or Ardhamagadhi language. This Shvetambara Canon contains 45 books. They consist of 11 Angas, 12 Upangas (Supplementary Portions), 10 Prakirnas (Scattered Pieces on variety of topics), 4 Mula sutras, 6 Chedasutras (sections on discipline), and 2 Sutras on knowledge. They are indeed the source books of Jaina Ethics, Yoga, Religion, Philosophy and Mythology.

#### Sanskrit Canon of the Digambaras

While not disputing with the dogmatic content of Shvetambara Canon, the Digambaras held that the language and form of Shvetambara Canon was not authentic. On the contrary, they were in possession of two very old Prakritik texts that predate the compilation of the Shvedambaras Canon. With those 2 ancient texts, the Digambaras tried to supplement them with commentaries and other series of works and made a claim that they were authoritative accounts of the Jain doctrine. They called their canons as **Anuyoga** (Expositions)

This category of Scriptures was written in Sanskrit largely from 700 to 900 CE. They take the position of the old lost Canon. They are distinguished into four groups and named them as Four Vedas.

- (1) The first Veda deals with history
- (2) The 2<sup>nd</sup> Veda deals with Cosmography
- (3) The 3<sup>rd</sup> Veda with Philosophy
- (4) The Last Veda deals with Ethics and rituals

An important feature of this Canon is that much of it deals with the lay community, and it includes writings that give a Jain a view of a world pre-history and of the origins of human institutions and everyday religious activity. This shows that a major development took place regarding systematization of lay life.

### 3.4 BASIC BELIEFS OF JAINISM

As regards **the basic teachings of the Jaina**, it may be convenient to present them in the form of the few propositions. We take care to enumerate only those basic teachings which are of general nature. Whatever is pertinent to the path of liberation and ethics will be treated in their respective sections below.

#### **Oneness of all Scriptures**

The orthodox position of the Jain tradition is that Holy Scriptures from the time of the Tirthankaras should essentially agree with one another. Only names are supposed to vary. Like the teachings of the early Tirthankaras, Mahavira's teachings also have been recorded in the Jain works. Though the different Canons have emerged, yet the basic beliefs about Mahavira are not questioned.

#### **No Belief in God**

Jainism is a non theistic religion. It does not believe a Creator God. For, it upholds that the reality of the Universe is explainable by the six substances: Jiva (Consciousness), Matter, Space, Motion-Ether, Resting Ether, Time. They are all eternal, having neither beginning nor end with respect to time. Accordingly, there is no need of God to create or manage the affairs of the universe. Universe is running on its own accord and by its own cosmic laws.

#### **Belief in Karma**

Central to Jainism is the belief in reincarnation and karma (merit and demerit). The self is polluted by karmic particles, bits of materials generated by a person's actions that attach to the soul and consequently bind the soul to material bodies through many births. There are eight kinds of karmas. The first four karmas are called Ghati karmas because they obscure the natural qualities of the soul. The last four karmas are known as Aghati Karmas because they are related to the body of the soul. If one successfully destroys all the eight Karmas, and when karmic particles are wiped from the self, then one attains release from the bondage. Once it gets enlightenment the soul no longer faces rebirth.

#### **Jain Gods**

In the path of spiritual progress, if one destroys all the eight karmas, then one is totally free, there is no body, no birth and death cycle, no feeling of pleasure and pain, or joy and sorrow. One attains such a liberation that one is a pure soul, now, with its omniscience, omnipotence, perfect vision, an everlasting blissful condition. One is now a **Siddha**, at the top of Lokakas known as *Moksha*. All siddhas possess the same quality of soul, and their attributes are same. However, they still maintain their unique identity.

But, if a person has destroyed only four 'ghati' karmas, one has regained the original attributes of one's soul omniscience, omnipotence, vision, power and bliss. But still one is a human being. One preaches the religion and remains in the state of blissful condition for the rest of one's life. One remains a **Jina** (One who has conquered one's inner enemies (passions) like anger, greed, passion, hatred, ego). **Nirgrantha** (means one who has gotten rid of all attachments) So, one is called **Arihanta**, one has attained **keval-jnana**.

Now, there are two kinds of Arihantas : If an Arihanta has established orders of monks and nuns, then one is called **Tirthankara**. If an arihanta does not establish the religious order one remains just a **kevali**. But one is in the state of perfect, blissful condition for the rest of one's life after attaining *Keval-jnana*. Now, all Arihants (Tirthankaras and ordinary-kevalis) and Siddhas are considered gods of Jain religion.

### **Jaina Prayer**

Jainas do not ask for any favors or material benefits from their gods, the Tirthankaras or from monks and nuns. They do not pray to a specific Tirthankara or monk by name. By saluting them, Jainas receive the inspiration from the five benevolent for the right path of true happiness and total freedom from the misery of life. So the **Navkar-mantra (Namaskar Mantra)** is universal prayer which the Jainas are supposed to say every day, bowing their heads, and when they start good work and events:

- Namō Arihantanam: - I bow to the arhantas - the ever-perfect spiritual victors; Namō Siddhanam: - I bow to the siddhas - the liberated souls;
- Namō Ayariyanam: - I bow to acharyas - the leaders of the Jain order;
- Namō Uvajjayanam: - I bow to upadhyayas - the learned preceptors;
- Namō Loe Savva Sahunam: - I bow to all saints and sages everywhere in the world.
- Eso Panch Namukkarō: - These five obeisances,
- Savva PavapPanasano: - Erase all Sins.
- Mangalancha Savvesin : - Amongst all that is auspicious,
- Padhamam Havai Mangalam: - This is the foremost.

### **The Unique Doctrine of Anekanta Vada**

It says that reality can be viewed from many (*aneka*) standpoints (*anta*). At least seven standpoints (*saptabhangi*) can be used to describe a thing. And all can be equally true. This is truly a Catholic outlook towards life. It is indeed an intellectual non-violence, implies respect for other views. It contributes to the tolerance of contrary opinions among different schools of thought. It has a special relevance for a multi religious society like ours.

### **Check your Progress II**

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer  
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1. State the central belief of the Jaina religion

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2. How did Jainism succeed in denying the belief in God as a Creator, Protector? What is the alternative?

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### 3.5 JAIN IDEA OF HUMAN DESTINY

As a religious reformer Mahavir was critical of the Vedas and the Brahmins. He saw no relevance of the priestly class and their sacrificial rites. The Jain religion is unique in this that it eradicates from human intellect the conception of God as creator, protector, and destroyer, and thus denouncing the worship of gods and goddesses as a means of salvation.

As an alternative to what he denounced Mahavira made religion simple and natural, free from elaborate ritual complexities. He insisted upon the popular impulse towards internal beauty and harmony of the soul. He expounded the features of the Soul in its pristine purity. Mahavira has said: "A living body is not merely an integration of limbs and flesh but it is the abode of the soul which potentially has perfect perception (*anant-darshana*), perfect knowledge (*anant-jnana*), perfect power (*anant-virya*), and perfect bliss (*anant-sukha*)."

In contrast, he made a through analysis of the pitiable conditions of the empirical self. He thereby established the need to fight passions and bodily senses to purify the soul and gain 'omniscience' or attain 'the total freedom' from the cycle of birth, life, pain, misery, and death, the Jain goal, known as Kevala-jana. The idea of supremacy of human and the possibility of attaining perfect power, knowledge, bliss. This is the sum and substance of Jain's idea of human destiny.

The first step in the process of self-realization is to discard superstitious beliefs and to adopt a rational attitude in life. Jainism lays down a definitive course of practical moral discipline, contemplation of the highest truth, and reorientation of life in light of these for attaining ultimate reality or truth.

The whole account of the Jain path to liberation may be summed up in three terms which are called **Ratna-traya** (three Jewels) in Jaina literature:

**Right perception** (*samyak darsana*): awareness of true nature of every substance of the universe, one's own self, religious goal, and the path. From the practical point of view, it means to have a total faith in the preaching of Tirthankaras, and their scriptures known as *agams*.



**Right knowledge** (*samyak jnana*): Along with the 6 universal Substance-entities and 9 tatvas, two specific doctrines of Anekantvada (non-absolutism) call for an attitude of openness. Syadvada points out limitations of knowledge and allows no room for assertions

**Right conduct** (*samyak charitrya*): proper action and proper conduct with a view to free oneself from attachment (*raga*) and aversion (*dvesha*) and attain the state of perfect equanimity. For practical purposes, one has to follow ethical codes, rules, and disciplines.

The three jewels, if cultivated **together** will ensure liberation. But if each of the three is practiced in isolation from the other two, it will cause conflicts or tensions. Individually, they are incomplete and insufficient because they are mutually dependent with one another. Right faith and right knowledge are required for right conduct; proper conduct through vows upkeeps proper perception and knowledge. Vows are to be undertaken with a full knowledge of their nature and a determination to carry them through.

### 3.6 JAIN ETHICS

A strict 'code of conduct' is prescribed in Jainism, not so much for the sake of morality as the path to liberation. In fact, Jainism views religion merely as a science of ethical practice. It conceives the human body as a chariot on which the soul rides towards liberation. The conduct of the present life should be aimed at attaining total freedom from which there is no return to the birth and death cycle. Every soul can attain godhood, i.e., supreme spiritual individuality by realizing its intrinsic purity and perfection.

The overall caste of Jaina's Path to Liberation is the Three Jewels (*Ratna Triya*) which you have seen just in the foregoing section: Right knowledge, Right intuition, and Right conduct. Now, the effulgence of the last mentioned Jewel consists in the Five Great Vows or popularly called '*Maha Panch Vrata*.' Here the Sanskrit word '*Vrata*' is derived from '*vri*' meaning "to select or choose." Technically, it means (1) choosing the right course of conduct, (2) exercising the judgement to see what is the right course out of several possible courses and (3) the effort of will (*viria*) implied. They are the following:

- Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*): not to cause harm to any life form.
- Truthfulness (*Satya*): to speak the harmless truth only
- Non-stealing (*Asteya*): not to take anything not properly given
- Chastity (*Brahmacharya*): not to indulge in sensual pleasure
- Non-possession / Non-attachment (*Aparigraha*): complete detachment from people, places, and material things.

#### **Non-violence** (*Ahimsa*)

Nonviolence is based on love and kindness for all living beings. Nonviolence in Jainism is not a negative virtue. It is based upon the positive quality of universal love and compassion. According to Jainism, all living beings, irrespective of their size, shape, or different spiritual developments, are equal. No living being has a right to harm, injure, or kill any other living

being, including animals, insects, and plants. Every living being has a right to exist and it is necessary to live with every other living being in perfect harmony and peace.

**Truth (*Satya*)**

Anger, greed, fear, jokes, etc., are the breeding grounds of untruth. To speak the truth requires moral courage. Only those who have conquered greed, fear, anger, jealousy, ego, frivolity, etc., can speak the truth. Jainism insists that one should not only refrain from falsehood, but should always speak the truth which should be wholesome and pleasant. One should remain silent if the truth causes pain, hurt, anger, or death of any living being.

**Non-stealing (*Achaurya or Asteya*)**

Stealing consists of taking another's property without consent, or by unjust or immoral methods. Further, one should not take anything which does not belong to oneself. It does not entitle one to take away a thing which may be lying unattended or unclaimed. One should observe this vow very strictly, and should not touch even a worthless thing which does not belong to oneself.

**Celibacy / Chastity (*Brahmacharya*)**

Total abstinence from sensual pleasure is called celibacy. Sensual pleasure is an infatuating force which sets aside all virtues and reason at the time of indulgence. This vow of controlling sensuality is very difficult to observe in its subtle form. One may refrain from physical indulgence but may still think of the pleasures of sensualism, which is prohibited in Jainism.

**Non-attachment / Non-possession (*Aparigraha*)**

Jainism believes that the more worldly wealth a person possesses, the more one is likely to commit sin to acquire the possession, and in a long run one may be more unhappy. The worldly wealth creates attachments which will continuously result in greed, jealousy, selfishness, ego, hatred, violence, etc. Lord Mahavir has said that wants and desires have no end, and only the sky is the limit for them. Attachments to worldly objects result in the bondage to the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, one who desires of spiritual liberation should withdraw from all attachments to pleasing objects of all the five senses.

**Check your progress III**

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer  
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1..Explain the importance of Morality in Jaina Dharma

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2. Elucidate the Maha-Vrata.

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### 3.7 LET US SUM UP

Jainism is one of the oldest religions that originated in India. Jains believe that every soul is divine and has the potential to achieve enlightenment or Moksha. Any soul which has conquered its own inner enemies and achieved the state of supreme being is called jina (Conqueror or Victor). Jainism is the path to achieve this state. Jainism is often referred to as Jain Dharma or Shraman Dharma or the religion of Nirgantha or religion of “Vratyas” by ancient texts. It was revived by a lineage of 24 enlightened ascetics called tirthankaras culminating with Parsva (9th century BCE) and Mahavira (6th century BCE). In the modern world, it is a small but influential religious minority with as many as 4 million followers in India, and successful growing immigrant communities in North America, Western Europe, the Far East, Australia and elsewhere. Jains have sustained the ancient Shraman or ascetic religion and have significantly influenced other religious, ethical, political and economic spheres in India. They have an ancient tradition of scholarship and have the highest degree of literacy in India. Jain libraries are the oldest in the country.

### 3.8 KEY WORDS

**Schism:** Schism means a division or a split. Originally it was used to refer to schism in Christianity such as the East-West Schism, the split between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church in the eleventh century.

**Incarnation and reincarnation:** Incarnation, which literally means *embodied in flesh*, refers to the conception and birth of a sentient creature (generally a human as in the case of Jesus Christ), who is the material manifestation of a being or force whose original nature is immaterial or divine. Reincarnation means “to be made flesh again.” It is a doctrine or metaphysical belief that some essential part of a living being (in some variations only human beings) survives death to be reborn in a new body.

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### 3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

#### Answers to Check Your Progress I

1. The prince Vardhamana became “Jina” because he established beyond doubt his conquest of self. However, he could achieve this conquest only through severest ascetic practices. Thus he proved himself “great hero,” Mahavira. Tirthangara literally means “bridge-maker.” In the religious circle, it means one who establishes order of monks / nuns and thereby makes a bridge (‘thirtha’) for ordinary people to cross the ocean of *samsara*. And after his enlightenment Mahavira organized his followers into a fourfold orders: two for monastic life (the Order of Sadhu (Monk) and the Order of Sadhvi (Nuns), and two for lay people: (the Order of Shrivak (lay men), and the Order of Shrivika (lay women).

2. The earliest division was in terms of **Digambaras** (literally “the sky clad”) and **Shvetambaras** (literally “the white clad”). By 15<sup>th</sup> century there arose from among the Sevetambaras another division by name **Sthanakvasi Sect** criticizing image-worship, and temple-cult. On the contrary, Lonka Sa pointed out that the practice was not lawful. So there arose after him **Lonka Sa Sect**. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there originated two sects from among the Digambaras too. The **Terapanthis** rose in revolt against the idol worship of **Vishvapanthis (or Bispanthis)**.

#### Answers to Check Your Progress II

1. Central to Jainism is the belief in reincarnation and *karma* (merit and demerit). The self is polluted by *karmic* particles, bits of materials generated by a person’s actions that attach to the soul and consequently bind the soul to material bodies through many births. It is from this factual problem that Jainism tries to liberate the self. The whole of Jain religion is nothing but offering the techniques that solves the problem of life.

2. Jainism succeeded in denying Creator-God by giving an alternative theory about the structure of the Universe. It upholds that the reality of the Universe is explainable by the six substances: *Jiva* (Consciousness), Matter, Space, Motion-Ether, Resting Ether, and Time. They are all eternal, having neither beginning nor end with respect to time. Accordingly, there is no need of God to create or manage the affairs of the universe. Universe is running on its own accord and by its own cosmic laws.

### Answers to Check Your Progress III

1. The Jain morality is an essential component of the path to liberation. In fact, religion according to Jainism, is nothing but a science of ethical practice. In this lies the importance of morality.

2. *Maha vratas* of Jainism has been adopted by every Indian tradition. They are *ahimsa*, *satya*, *brahmacharya*, *asteya* and *aparigraha*.

